

with Prime Minister Morrison of Australia as well. Any day Congress has the opportunity to strengthen working relationships with two of our Nation's closest friends and allies is a good day indeed.

Our meetings today come at a time when our most important trans-Atlantic and trans-Pacific alliances are facing growing threats to collective security and to prosperity.

In the face of Russia's meddling, China's expansionism, a rekindled War on Terror, and further threats to democracy and human rights around the world, the steady leadership of committed partners is more crucial than ever. So I specifically wanted to thank our friends in Australia and the United Kingdom for their years of loyal friendship that have underpinned coalition operations in Afghanistan and our joint efforts elsewhere to check the most pressing threats to our nations and to the kind of world that will help us thrive.

I will be reaffirming my own commitment that America must be the reliable, committed, and globally engaged ally that our closest friends deserve.

ECONOMIC RECOVERY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on another matter, over the past several months, American families have had to contend with a historic amount of painful, painful inflation. This summer, we saw the prices for core personal consumption soar at the fastest pace in nearly 30 years. Last month, the Producer Price Index notched its steepest year-on-year jump in more than a decade. All across the country, across the economy, families and businesses are being hit hard.

One measure of construction materials is reporting that homebuilders are facing materials costs that are 22 percent higher than just last year—22 percent higher than just last year. Homeowners and renters are approaching a fall and winter in which heating costs are projected to reach a 13-year high. Eighty-six percent of respondents told one recent poll they were either “extremely” or “very worried” about inflation.

Now, this is exactly what Republicans, independent experts, and even liberal economists warned would happen if Democrats started ramming through massive, massive inflationary spending. Back in the springtime, Larry Summers, the top economic adviser to both President Clinton and President Obama, warned at the time that runaway spending could “set off inflationary pressures of a kind we have not seen in a generation.” And, of course, that is exactly what has happened.

Well, just ask any working family in this country about their last trip to the gas station, the grocery store, or the car dealership. Inflation has gotten so bad on Democrats' watch that it has wiped out every ounce of the average

American worker's pay growth during this economic recovery and then some. Annual real wage growth is negative even though employers have been handing out raises because—because—of inflation.

Remember, at the start of the year, working Americans had an economy that was teed up for a roaring recovery. So when Washington Democrats rolled out their first springtime spending spree, even the Washington Post cautioned that “the improving picture is raising questions about whether the stimulus bill is mismatched to the needs of the current moment.” That was the Washington Post on the so-called rescue package that passed back in March.

You might think that the disastrous consequences of Democrats' last spending binge for working Americans might give our colleagues some pause about the next one, but, alas, no such luck. Behind closed doors, they are putting together another, even more reckless taxing-and-spending spree. They want to take the last bill, which Democrats called the most leftwing law in American history, and actually dwarf even that.

Massive tax hikes on Americans that will hurt families and help China. Let me say that again. Massive tax hikes on Americans that will hurt families and help China. A socialist transformation that nobody voted for last year. Another invitation for even more painful inflation that will hit working Americans right where it hurts. The American people don't want it, and Senate Republicans won't support it.

GOVERNMENT FUNDING

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, now on a related matter, yesterday evening, Senator SHELBY and I introduced a continuing resolution that could pass the Senate and prevent a government shutdown. Our legislation would fund the government through December. It would restore the defensive assistance for our ally Israel that House Democrats stripped out to appease some of the worst elements of the far left.

As one frustrated Democratic Congressman stated yesterday, “A missile defense system [like] Iron Dome defends civilians from missiles. Hence the name. Only in a morally inverted universe would this be considered a ‘controversy.’” That is a House Democrat describing the action yesterday of House Democrats.

Our bill also removes the debt limit language that Democrats have known since July—since July—will not receive bipartisan support from Senate Republicans. As one of my colleagues put it succinctly, if Washington Democrats want to jam through trillions of dollars in reckless spending all by themselves, they can raise the debt limit all by themselves. If they want to do one, they will need to do the other. To do one, if they need to do one, they will do the other. It is that simple.

BORDER SECURITY

Mr. MCCONNELL. Now, one final matter. The American people are watching a terrible sight unfold down on our southern border. Many thousands of people, largely from Haiti, are literally huddled together underneath a bridge in Del Rio, TX, just across the Rio Grande. Temperatures have been in the triple digits. The conditions are unsanitary and inhumane.

This nightmare is the direct result of the leftwing policies and leftwing messages pushed by the Biden administration. They say their approach to immigration is the compassionate path, the one that reflects the soul of America. They are wrong. In no way does it honor America's soul or uphold American values to tolerate a major border security crisis and unending—unending—humanitarian disaster that appear to be permanent features of life under the Biden administration.

This false choice is the constant refrain from the left. Either we adopt Democratic policies that lure people into literal squalor and effectively open our borders in the middle of a pandemic or else we are somehow betraying the spirit of the Statue of Liberty? That is simply nonsense.

Legal, orderly immigration has been a proud strength of our country and a core pillar of the American way of life literally for generations. That is completely different than Washington Democrats sabotaging our border while publicly advertising a catalog—a catalog—of socialist benefits they say they will provide for illegal immigrants who manage to make it in.

When President Biden was sworn in, thousands and thousands of people took his far-left campaign rhetoric seriously and began streaming toward our borders. One person at the border directly told the Washington Post they came because they heard “President Biden was letting people in.”

First, in the springtime, his administration called this a seasonal surge. Well, so much for that. We have had more than 150,000 border apprehensions every single month for the past 6 months. Encounters usually fall off during the hot summer months, but on President Biden's watch, the opposite has happened.

Listen to one recent example of the chaos. A few days ago, the Biden administration filled a big bus with illegal immigrants from this encampment. The bus set out for somewhere else in Texas. But according to news reporting, partway through the journey, the illegal immigrants on board revolted, took control of the bus, and broke out. But more broadly, it sounds like catch-and-release may be the de facto Biden policy.

Just this morning, the Associated Press reports that according to government officials, “Haitian migrants camped in a . . . Texas border town are being released in the United States . . . on a very, very large scale . . . undercutting the Biden administration's